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THE SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST

SECURITY COUNCIL
Forty-sixth year

Letter dated 30 May 1991 from the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Even as the international community is making strenuous efforts to find an equitable and comprehensive settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict by organizing an international peace conference on the basis of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973), Israel is building new settlements in all the occupied Arab and Palestinian territories, and is moving new immigrants into those settlements. Those acts constitute a serious violation of the provisions of the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949, particularly article 49, as well as a clear violation of all the United Nations resolutions on the question, specifically Security Council resolutions 465 (1980) and 497 (1981), in which the Council stated, inter alia, that the Israeli decision to impose its laws, jurisdiction and administration in the occupied Syrian Golan Heights was null and void and without international legal effect, and demanded that Israel comply with the Fourth Geneva Convention, which applied to all the occupied Arab territories.

The recent statement by Mr. Ariel Sharon, the Israeli Minister of Housing, following the departure of the United States Secretary of State after his fourth trip to the region, proves that Israel is determined to defy the international community by continuing to impose the annexation of the occupied Syrian Golan, and to consolidate that annexation by creating a de facto demographic, economic and social situation, through the application of its policy of expansionism and settlement.

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The number of Israeli settlers in the occupied Syrian Golan now exceeds 12,400, and 43 settlements have been established in the Golan by Israel, the occupying Power. On Tuesday, 21 May 1991, Sharon declared that he would like to double the number of settlements in the occupied Syrian Golan. As for the Chairman of the Golan Settlement Commission, he referred to a plan to reflect Israel's determination and commitment not to give up the occupied Syrian Golan.

Those Israeli practices are impeding peace efforts; Mr. James Baker, the United States Secretary of State, has said that they constitute the major obstacle that he has encountered in his efforts to find a peaceful settlement in the Middle East, and that upon each of his visits to Israel as part of his peace mission, he noted the announcement of the establishment of new settlements in the occupied Arab territories.

The Syrian Arab Republic believes in the need to respect and implement United Nations resolutions, and to respect the international rule of law that is being talked about throughout the international community now that the application of that international rule of law has become the main characteristic of international relations. It is acknowledged today that the international community is capable of imposing that rule of law on any State that deviates from it. To refuse to apply United Nations resolutions is to rebel against the international rule of law, and the United Nations should take the necessary measures to deal with that act of rebellion.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter circulated as an official document of the General Assembly, under the item entitled "The situation in the Middle East", and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Dia-Allah EL-FATTAL
Ambassador
Permanent Representative